

REMARKS

The examiners findings have been carefully considered and the response is believed to place the application in condition for allowance.

In a telephone contact with the examiner, it was agreed that the captions "12" were acceptable as filed considering that the elastomer sleeve was the same on all related figures when viewed as an original part. The difference in shape was the result of deformation of the sleeve caused by manner of attachment of the elastomer sleeve the rest of the assembly.

Addressing now the amendments required by the examiner, figure 3 has been modified only by placing the 5-5 line for the section of figure 5. (The specification has been amended to correct related errors.) Figure 9 has been changed to make it an accurate fragmental view of the apparatus of figure 7. Element 24, as filed, was erroneously shown to be directly connected to sleeve 21. It now accurately reflects the parent figure 7 of which it was cited as a fragmented view.

Addressing now the figures as they relate to claims, claims 1 and 12 read on a connector assembly having two separate flexible couplings. Claim 9 reads on a single coupling, and the difference in species seems appropriate. Claim 1 teaches an elastomer sleeve, whereas claim 12 teaches a flexible sleeve.

Please note lines 13-21, page 5 which relate figure 7 to figure 1. Figure 7 shows only one connector but it is, in effect, a fragmented view of an alternate configuration of either flexible connector of figure 1.

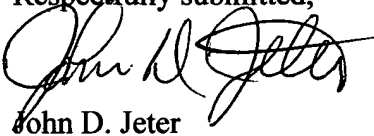
By this response, claim 9 and the related dependent claims 10 and 11 are withdrawn without prejudice and reserved for a divisional application, if filed.

The claims and figures are related as shown below.

Claim 1 reads on figure 1. Claim 2 reads on figure 1. Claims 3 and 4 read on figure 2. Claims 5-8 read on figure 3. Claims 6 and 7 read on figures 1-4 in that the sleeve 12 can be placed in axial tension or compression by dimensional matters related to the supporting structure..

It is respectfully requested that figures 5 and 6 should be considered part of the species I in that claims reading upon figures 5 and 6 are dependent from the selected claim 1.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John D. Jeter", written over a printed name.

John D. Jeter